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This copy for:

#551

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH JODY POWELL

AT 2:45 P.M. EST

JANUARY 24, 1980

THURSDAY

(AT 2:45 P.M. EST)

MR. POWELL: We have a couple of things to begin with today. First of all, I will provide you with a brief readout on the meeting with Italian Prime Minister Cossiga today with the understanding that we will have a press statement with somewhat more detail following the final meeting tomorrow.

Then, because we have had a number of questions about the President's announcement on registration, I have some people here who will be prepared to deal with your questions on that issue. So let me deal with the Prime Minister's visit first and any questions you may have off of that readout and once that is completed then we will move to the Selective Service question.

The President met with Italian Prime Minister Cossiga today for one hour and 50 minutes. The two leaders discussed a wide range of areas of mutual cooperation and interest. The President felt the meeting was cordial and beneficial. It was characterized by a full and open exchange of views.

Among the topics discussed were the situation in Afghanistan and Iran and the state of East-West relations. With regard to the latter point, both agreed that detente must be both global and indivisible. They also discussed the situation in the Mediterranean and the Middle East and, of course, matters relating to the North Atlantic Alliance. Both leaders agreed upon the importance of the solidarity of the Atlantic Alliance. There were also discussions on, of course, the upcoming economic summit in Venice scheduled for June of this year, the expansion of investment and increased agricultural production for Italy, particularly meat, expanded cultural and educational